



LIVING ERA

# Bing Crosby

HIS  
GREATEST  
HITS  
OF THE

30s

*It's Easy  
To Remember*

## Bing Crosby

HIS GREATEST HITS OF THE 30s  
25 original mono recordings 1931-1939

ADD

CD AJA 5394

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MONO

Made in England

Printed in England

LC 07967

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| 8. YOU'RE GETTING TO BE A HABIT<br>WITH ME<br>Guy Lombardo & his Royal Canadians | 2.50 | 17. SWEET LEILANI<br>Lani McIntyre & his Hawaiians                        | 3.12 |   |      |
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**Total time = 76.24**

PUBLISHERS: Famous (BMG) (1,2,3,11,12), Keith Prowse (4),  
B.Feldman/Memory Lane/Redwood (5), Victoria (6), Warner Chappell  
(7,13,18), B.Feldman (8,9,20,22,23), Campbell Connelly (10,16,17,19,21,24),  
Peter Maurice/Redwood (14), EMI United Part. (15)



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ASV Ltd., LONDON, ENGLAND

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In the elections for overall top popular vocalist of the 20th century, the partisans will continue to argue ad infinitum the case for their respective candidates. It is however certain that, thanks to a lucky combination of circumstances, Bing Crosby became the best-selling vocalist and Number One USA chart-topper of the 1930s and 1940s. He rose to stardom during the heyday of network radio, he was a phonogenic crooner who had the ability to "communicate" through the crackle of the shellac and his records sold in millions world-wide.

Harry Lillis Crosby was born in Tacoma, Washington, on 2 May 1903. A musical child of a God-fearing, respectable, part-Irish American family he was from an early age strongly influenced by Celtic traditions and impulses. Encouraged by his mother, a Harrigan, he idolised the mythical Ireland enshrined in the records of America's own resident Irish legend – John McCormack. And during his formative years the other key ingredient was added when he came under the influence of white jazz's more sophisticated players – Beiderbecke, Venuti and Paul Whiteman (1890-1967).

A keen drummer in his school band, while attending Gonzaga University, in Spokane young Harry, by now also doubling as vocalist within his small college combo, found a musical soul-mate in fellow-Spokanean law-student Al Rinker (b. 1907). Their interests coincided; both were sold on the new crooning style of Nick Lucas, Gene Austin and others and they shared a mutual ambition for a career in music, a quest in which they were assisted by Rinker's sister, the blues-singer Mildred Bailey (1907-1951). Through Mildred's good offices, in November 1926 they were hired as a vocal duo with Whiteman's orchestra and, with pianist-songwriter Harry Barris (1905-1962) formed the highly-praised Rhythm Boys trio.

Bing stayed with Whiteman for more than three years. His first solo vocals were recorded with the Whiteman orchestra, he made his film debut with the band in 1930 in *King Of Jazz* and, following a stint in Los Angeles with Gus Arnheim's orchestra and the smash-hit with "I Surrender, Dear" which earned him a CBS radio contract, by the close of 1931 he was a fully fledged soloist: a recording artist whose records sold in armfuls and a regular broadcaster with a show prefaced by his theme-song "Where The Blue Of The Night". He sang in night-clubs, appeared in eight Mack Sennett film shorts and his prestigious contract with Brunswick Records, along with clever marketing, soon made him America's most popular crooner. He sang in an intimate, relaxed manner which millions found irresistible.

Bing Crosby had more than 150 hits in the US popular charts between 1931 and the end of 1939, of which 22 were Number Ones and 14 were Number Twos. The latter group

included such numbers as "I Found A Million-Dollar Baby", "Sweet Georgia Brown", "Young And Healthy", "The Last Round-Up", "I Wished On The Moon", "It's The Natural Thing To Do" and **An Apple For The Teacher**, but probably Johnny Mercer's **I'm An Old Cowhand** (the classic standard from Bing's 1936 film-musical vehicle *Rhythm On The Range* which out of thirteen weeks charted spent four at No.2) has remained the most durable.

The name of Bing Crosby was soon a household one thanks to his recordings and film-appearances; it was a synonym for crooning. The catalogue of his 1930s Number Ones (the present compilation includes 21) reads like an all-embracing song-almanac of the 'Devil's Decade'. The list begins in 1931 with **Out Of Nowhere** (music by New York-born composer, pianist-arranger, and bandleader Johnny W. Green (1908-1989), whose 1930 song "Body And Soul" since proved an even bigger seller, albeit not for El Bingo), **Just One More Chance** (a 1928 song by New York composer-lyricist and vocalist Sam Coslow-b.1902), **At Your Command** (a Crosby composition, credits shared with Harry Barris) and **Dinah** (a revival of the 1925 jazz standard by the New York pianist-composer Harry Akst (1894-1963) and a joint No.1 for the Mills Brothers.

Next, in 1932, came **Please** (this number, by New York-born pianist-composer and arranger Ralph Rainger (1901-1942) predates the film-songs he wrote for Bing, most notably **Love In Bloom** and **June In January**, both introduced in *She Loves Me Not* and both six-week No.1s in 1934) and **Brother, Can You Spare A Dime?** (this song, the biggest hit by the Russian-born American songwriter, author and producer Jay Gorney (1896-1990) became the virtual anthem of the Depression). During 1933, Bing had two No.1s with songs from films – neither of which were his own. Both were compositions by the Brooklyn-born pianist-composer Harry Warren (1893-1981) and both were first introduced by Dick Powell: **You're Getting To Be A Habit With Me** in *Forty Second Street*, **The Shadow Waltz** in *Gold Diggers Of 1933*.

1934 brought Bing a further Number 1 with another bespoke Barris item **Little Dutch Mill** and during 1935, quite apart from a No.7 hit version of **Silent Night** (which, in this and its subsequent re-recordings, sold a staggering ten million copies) came **Soon – There'll Just Be Two Of Us** and **It's Easy To Remember** (both by the New York team of Richard Rodgers (1902-1979) and Lorenz Hart (1895-1943) and both from the score of Bing's film-musical *Mississippi*) and **Red Sails In The Sunset** (with lyrics by Northern Irish pianist-songwriter Jimmy Kennedy (1902-1984) and music by Will Grosz (writing as 'Hugh Williams') this song became a great favourite during the late '30s.

In 1936, Bing had a ten-week No.1 with **Pennies From Heaven** (the title-song from the

film of that name, with music by Californian lyricist, author and publisher Johnny Burke (1908-1964), this was always high on the "cheer-up"-songs list of the Depression years and took on a renewed lease when it was revived during the late 1980s as a theme for the acclaimed Dennis Potter BBC TV series) while 1937 brought him a further three. With Mercer lyrics and the catchiest of tunes by Richard A. Whiting, **Too Marvelous For Words** (from the 1937 Ruby Keeler film-musical *Ready, Willing And Able*) has a strong period sound which has lasted, whereas Joe Burke's **The Moon Got In My Eyes** (from Bing's own vehicle *Double Or Nothing*) and **Bob White** (a jiving Mercer and Bernie Hanighen collaboration Bing shared here with Connee Boswell), while both good tunes, may now sound less familiar to modern ears.

In 1938 Bing had a four-week No.1 with the Johnny Burke-James V. Monaco "occasional" **I've Got A Pocketful Of Dreams**, a two-week No.1 revival (again shared with Connee Boswell) of Irving Berlin's 1911 ragtime landmark **Alexander's Ragtime Band** and another two-weeker with **You Must Have Been A Beautiful Baby** (Warren and Mercer again, this was originally a Dick Powell creation featured in the 1938 Warner Brothers film-musical *Hard To Get*).

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1. **IT'S EASY TO REMEMBER**  
(Rodgers, Hart)  
**Georgie Stoll & his Orchestra**  
The Rhythmettes & Three Shades Of Blue  
DLA 95-B, Los Angeles, February 21, 1935
2. **OUT OF NOWHERE**  
(Green, Heyman)  
**Victor Young & his Orchestra**  
LA 983-A, Los Angeles, March 30, 1931
3. **JUST ONE MORE CHANCE**  
(Coslow, Johnston)  
**Victor Young & his Orchestra**  
LA 1037-A, Los Angeles, May 4, 1931
4. **AT YOUR COMMAND**  
(Barris, Crosby, Tobias)  
**Harry Barris – piano**  
LA 1051-B, Los Angeles, June 24, 1931
5. **DINAH**  
(Lewis, Akst, Young)  
**Duet with The Mills Brothers**  
E 37467-A, New York, December 16, 1931
6. **PLEASE**  
(Rainger, Robin)  
**Anson Weeks & his Orchestra**  
SF 11-AA, San Francisco, September 16, 1932
7. **BROTHER, CAN YOU SPARE A DIME?**  
(Harburg, Gorney)  
**Lennie Hayton & his Orchestra**  
B 12502-A, New York, October 25, 1932]
8. **YOU'RE GETTING TO BE A HABIT WITH ME**  
(Warren, Dubin)  
**Guy Lombardo & his Royal Canadians**  
B 12887-A, New York, January 12, 1933
9. **THE SHADOW WALTZ**  
(Warren, Dubin)  
**Jimmie Grier & his Orchestra**  
B 794-A, Los Angeles, June 13, 1933
10. **LITTLE DUTCH MILL**  
(Barris, Freed)  
**Jimmie Grier & his Orchestra**  
LA-144A, Los Angeles, March 10, 1934
11. **LOVE IN BLOOM**  
(Rainger, Robin)  
**Irving Aaronson & his Commanders**  
LA 182-A, Los Angeles, July 5, 1934
12. **JUNE IN JANUARY**  
(Rainger, Robin)  
**Georgie Stoll & his Orchestra**  
DLA 71-B, Los Angeles, November 9, 1934
13. **SOON – THERE'LL JUST BE TWO OF US**  
(Rodgers, Hart)  
**Georgie Stoll & his Orchestra**  
DLA 93-A, Los Angeles, February 21, 1935
14. **RED SAILS IN THE SUNSET**  
(Williams, Kennedy)  
**Victor Young & his Orchestra**  
DLA 253-A, Los Angeles, November 12, 1935
15. **I'M AN OLD COWHAND**  
**Jimmy Dorsey & his Orchestra**  
DLA 442-A, Los Angeles, July 17, 1936
16. **PENNIES FROM HEAVEN**  
(Johnston, Burke)  
**Georgie Stoll & his Orchestra**  
DLA463-A, Los Angeles, July 29, 1936
17. **SWEET LEILANI**  
(Owens)  
**Lani McIntyre & his Hawaiians**  
DLA 722, Los Angeles, February 23, 1937
18. **TOO MARVELOUS FOR WORDS**  
(Whiting, Mercer)  
**Jimmy Dorsey & his Orchestra**  
DLA 738-A, Los Angeles, March 3, 1937
19. **THE MOON GOT IN MY EYES**  
(Burke, Johnston)  
**John Scott Trotter & his Orchestra**  
DLA 831, Los Angeles, July 12, 1937
20. **BOB WHITE,  
WHATCHA GONNA SWING TONIGHT?**  
(Hanighan, Mercer)  
**Duet with Connee Boswell;  
John Scott Trotter & his Orchestra**  
DLA 972-A, Los Angeles, September 25, 1937
21. **I'VE GOT A POCKETFUL OF DREAMS**  
(Monaco, Burke)  
**John Scott Trotter & his Orchestra**  
DLA 1312-A, Los Angeles, July 11, 1938
22. **ALEXANDER'S RAGTIME BAND**  
(Berlin)  
**Duet with Connee Boswell;  
Victor Young & his Concert Orchestra;  
with Eddie Cantor – spoken introduction**  
DLA 1152-A, Los Angeles, January 26, 1938
23. **YOU MUST HAVE BEEN A BEAUTIFUL BABY**  
(Warren, Mercer)  
**Bob Crosby & his Orchestra**  
C 91511-A, Chicago, October 14, 1938]
24. **AN APPLE FOR THE TEACHER**  
(Monaco, Burke)  
**Duet with Connee Boswell;  
John Scott Trotter & his Orchestra**  
DLA 1782-A, Los Angeles, June 22, 1939
25. **SILENT NIGHT, HOLY NIGHT**  
(Gruber)  
**Victor Young & his Orchestra;  
The Guardsmen Quartette**  
DLA261-A, Los Angeles, November 12, 1935

Compilation by Ray Crick  
Transcription from original 78s by Peter Dempsey  
Audio restoration & remastering by Martin Haskell  
Designed by Studio B, The Creative People  
Cover image courtesy of Pictorial Press

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His Greatest Hits of the 30s  
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